TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Annual Report

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ANNUAL REPORT 1939

Section I.—General

The year 1939 was, on the whole, a disappointing year climatically.

The total value of the chief agricultural products exported was £2,984,761 as compared with £2,816,225 in the previous year and £4,167,139 in 1937. The average value per ton f.o.b. of the commodities included in the above total was £17 18s. 6d., or one shilling per ton greater than the 1938 average value and £5 18s. 0d. per ton below the average value for 1937.

Non-Native Development.—Mention was made in the report for 1938 that agricultural development by non-native enterprise was adversely affected by the trend of world events. The status of Tanganyika as a mandated territory and the resultant doubts in the minds of many as to the ultimate future of Tanganyika in its relation to the British Crown has without doubt severely restricted the influx of new settlers and new capital without which accelerated progress cannot be made. The tendency noted in the report for 1938 remained during the year under review culminating in the outbreak of war in September. This necessitated a readjustment to war-time conditions which inevitably caused a setback, however temporary, to normal development. In this connection it will be appreciated that since a large proportion of those engaged in plantation enterprise or farming operations were of German nationality, this readjustment has entailed drastic changes in the management of the various estates and farms with consequent temporary reduction in output. It is a tribute to the initiative and enterprise of established British and neutral interests that curtailment of production was in fact reduced to negligible proportions.

The measures taken on the outbreak of war for the management of enemy properties proved successful. Considerable difficulties had to be overcome but it can be recorded that by the end of the year practically all enemy-owned estates of importance were in full pre-war production either under lease to British or neutral interests or under the direct management of the Custodian of Enemy Property.

Native Development.—In certain areas particularly in parts of the Lake and Western provinces real progress can be recorded in the development by large numbers of cultivators of an improved system of farming based on the use of cattle manure coupled with increased attention to soil conservation measures. In these areas it is true to say that increased production goes hand in hand with good agricultural practice. For example, in one district when numbers of plots were examined in detail it was found that seventy-nine per cent were manured either in whole or in part. Attention was given during the year to increasing the quantity of manure available to the cultivator by encouraging the collection of grain straw for fodder and bedding cattle, and satisfactory progress was made. Work with pack oxen has been extended and

a satisfactory cheap locally-made pack saddle perfected. In the Lake and Western provinces anti-erosion soil conservation measures of general application are the closure of hilltops to cultivation, grazing, the cutting of firewood or burning, the establishment of grazing reserves, the encouragement of ridge contour cultivation as opposed to flat cultivation, hedging, contour banking and the provision of additional water supplies in the form of tank dams.

Notes on the Chief Export Crops

Sisal.—During the first half of the year the production of sisal in the Territory promised to surpass the record output attained in 1938 but this could not be achieved in face of the temporary dislocation of the industry consequent upon the outbreak of war. Nevertheless exports during the year amounted to 93,110 tons having a total value of £1,223,477, a decrease of 8,300 tons on the 1938 figure. The average f.o.b. value of all grades was £13 7s. 0d. per ton. Export figures for 1939 do not, however, present a true picture of actual production for owing to the reduction in shipping facilities which occurred during the last four months of the year there was at the end of the year an abnormal accumulation of stocks in the Territory. The industry is still the foremost in Tanganyika which retains its position as one of the world's principal suppliers of sisal fibre.

For a considerable period price ruled low on a dull market and by August had declined to £14 10s. 0d. per ton c.i.f. or a level below cost of production despite the fact that there was no world accumulation of stocks. At the commencement of hostilities control measures were introduced and a Sisal Controller stationed in Dar es Salaam was appointed for all countries in British East Africa. A quota system was instituted in conjunction with the United Kingdom Government to ensure that Allied war requirements of sisal received priority and were fulfilled. The price of £26 per ton c.i.f. for No. 1 grade sisal fibre was fixed which is subject to revision if a substantial rise in production costs eventuates. This means a fair return to the grower who was at once enabled to continue operating and the economic structure of the Territory was not seriously affected.

Approximately a quarter of the total sisal exports emanated from enemy sisal estates. These were leased to reputable non-enemy sisal producers immediately after war started resulting in continuity of working and the minimum of disturbance to the large labour force employed on these properties.

The registration of sisal plantations and the submission of periodical returns of planted areas, fibre output, stocks of sisal in hand or in transit, and particulars of labour employed, legislated for under the Sisal Industry Ordinance, 1938, came into effect at the beginning of the year. The compilation of the returns is undertaken by a Registrar who is also Secretary of the Sisal Growers' Association. These comprehensive statistics proved of timely value when it became necessary to initiate control measures and contributed towards a swift application of the quota system.

Coffee.—Exports of coffee during 1939 totalled 16,599 tons, an increase of some 2,000 tons over the figure for 1938 but 2,000 tons below the record production of 1935. The Bukoba crop was a record one of 10,861 tons with an f.o.b. value at Bukoba of £246,048, while the native crop on Kilimanjaro showed an increase of approximately 900 tons of parchment coffee over the crop of the previous season. The Northern Province native coffee crop has for

the second year in succession broken all previous records while at the same time the trees remained in excellent condition and gave promise of high yields during 1940.

In Bugufi planting of coffee continues and the 1939 crop amounted to 50 tons, an improvement on the crop of the previous year. An increase in Antestia is reported.

Cotton.—Despite adverse climatic conditions a production of 65,145 bales valued at £557,358 was exported. The value of cotton to native communities especially in a poor season was again demonstrated. In the Lake Province, with the exception of rice, no other crop gave a reasonable return to the grower. There is no doubt that without the proceeds of the cotton crop for which £160,000 was paid to growers the economy of that province would have been subjected to a very severe strain.

There was a substantial increase in production in the Eastern Province particularly in the Bagamoyo and Rufiji districts; in the former district a record crop was produced. Production in the Northern and Tanga provinces declined.

Much of the increase in production is attributed to improved methods of cultivation, to early planting and to the fact that, in some parts of the Territory, cotton is becoming established as part of a farming system in which the maintenance of soil fertility is of primary importance. The whole of the Lake Province crop was sold at low prices while growers in the rest of the Territory marketed the bulk of their crop after the outbreak of war and were fortunate in receiving the benefit of the rapid rise in price which resulted.

Non-native production decreased to 4,015 bales. The British Cotton Growing Association continued to maintain the services of two ginnery inspectors seconded to the department from their staff.

Mr F. R. Parnell of the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation visited the Territory during the year for the purpose of advising on cotton breeding and experimental work and to make recommendations to the Corporation as to the grant of further financial assistance to this Territory. His report is a most valuable one and his visit was much appreciated.

Towards the end of the year three experienced officers of the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation from Southern Rhodesia were seconded to this Territory for the duration of the war. These officers have been placed in charge of the principal experiment stations thus enabling those officers of the department in the areas concerned to devote their full time to work in the various districts.

Groundnuts.—Another most disappointing season has to be recorded and for the second year in succession a crop of very small proportions, in relation to the acreage planted, was harvested. Limited supplies of seed consequent upon the comparative failure of the 1938 crop and badly distributed rainfall were the main reasons for this shortfall with the result that exports totalled only 4,496 tons valued at £41,767 which, while an increase of nearly 1,000 tons over the figure for 1938, falls far short of the average export of 22,500 tons shipped during each of the years 1936 and 1937. Since in the Western Province groundnuts form the chief economic crop, the failure of this mainstay for two consecutive seasons has had serious adverse repercussions on the prosperity of native growers in that province.

Sesame.—Exports during the year totalled 4,639 tons valued at £48,081, a slight decrease over the figure recorded for 1938. Practically the whole of

the production comes from the Southern Province where adverse weather conditions and, in certain areas, the ravages of insect pests resulted in a lower output than normal.

Copra.—Prices of copra on the local market of the grade usually produced by natives declined from one shilling and fifty cents per *frasila* (36 pounds) at the beginning of the year to one shilling in August, the lowest figure reached for several years. On the outbreak of war there was a sharp appreciation in value and copra in December was quoted at three shillings and forty cents per *frasila* for No. 1 grade.

Increasing quantities of copra are absorbed annually by the local oil mills for the manufacture of soap and at Tanga one mill has begun production of a refined oil for cooking purposes which finds a ready sale.

Exports of copra amounted to 6,378 tons valued at £50,457, an increase of 2,300 tons over the quantity exported during 1938.

Grains.—Exports during the year were : rice, 9,901 tons; sorghums and millets, 7,182 tons; and maize, 1,751 tons. The increase in sorghum and millet exports was mainly due to an abnormal demand, owing to famine conditions, from India.

Production of wheat, both non-native and native, in the Northern Province showed marked expansion, a total of 1,494 tons being railed to Kenya, compared with the previous highest exports of 256 tons in 1938. Of the total, 257 tons were native-grown, this figure is not however a true reflection of total native production since, in certain parts, wheat has now become an important article of native diet.

Tea.—The additional allocation of 2,050 acres made to the Territory under the International Tea Restriction Scheme was issued to planters in July, the outbreak of war, however, prevented any of this additional acreage being planted up. By the end of the year arrangements had been completed for the leasing of enemy tea estates, which were in the majority, to a British firm and proposals were under consideration for the reallocation of the acreage allotment, made in 1939 to enemy estates, to British and neutral interests.

Despite the inevitable dislocation of normal work arising from the outbreak of war and the consequent change in ownership of the majority of the estates, production of tea was well maintained. The total production of made tea amounted to 582,538 pounds of which 436,352 pounds were exported. The comparative figures for 1938 were 521,987 pounds and 315,392 pounds respectively.

Sugar.—Exports amounted to 3,664 tons valued at £73,278.

Tobacco.—The Songea native-grown fire-cured crop amounted to 509 tons, an increase of 128 tons on the 1938 crop.

In the Iringa District considerable interest was shown in the production of flue-cured tobacco and a co-operative association of growers was formed. Production reached 34,000 pounds, the crop being sold locally.

Pyrethrum.—Production in the 1938 to 1939 season totalled 106 tons. Prior to the war the majority of the planters of this crop were German nationals, hence the outbreak of war caused a temporary reduction in output. Quality was well up to standard. Several new farms for the cultivation of this crop were established in the Njombe District.

Other Crops and Products.—There was a record export of gum (copal and arabic) of 1,311 tons valued at £28,258, and of ghee, 896 tons valued at £57,701. The production of onions by natives in the Kilimanjaro area con-

tinued to increase, exports approaching 1,000 tons. Exports of beeswax totalled 456 tons valued at £43,344.

Pests and Diseases

No serious outbreaks or damage to crops has to be recorded. The Migratory locust was reported from most areas of the Lake, Western and Northern provinces and, although egg-laying took place, control measures were sufficiently effective to prevent any serious damage. Swarms of Red locusts were present in parts of the Southern Province, Bugufi and Ufipa during the year.

Section II.—Soil Conservation

The programme followed for the protection of the Territory's soils combines the complementary policies of extending on the one hand the natives' understanding and appreciation of the importance of anti-erosion measures, and on the other a constant encouragement backed by Native Authority Rules to accelerate the adoption of the necessary control measures. As in the past, limitation of staff continues to be a serious handicap, and the need for increasing the numbers of trained African instructors who can make direct contact with the peasantry is particularly urgent. This contact is essential if a rapid and widespread soil-preservation consciousness is to be achieved by both the cultivators and their chiefs and leaders. The native authorities in particular should have a far greater appreciation of the dangers of soil erosion and of the necessity for taking immediate action to arrest the damage that is being done. Considerable progress has already been achieved in extending the application of methods of soil protection, but until each individual village headman takes the same interest in soil erosion problems as he does in other village administrative affairs, such progress cannot be carried out with the rapidity which is so necessary.

Steady progress is being made despite the limitations discussed above. Most districts now have the necessary legislation under Native Authority Rules to enforce anti-erosion measures and to control indiscriminate burning. Hundreds of offenders were apprehended and charged under these rules in an effort to reduce the damage done by bush fires, and although this has had some effect, in many areas the scattered nature of the population makes such control very difficult.

The realignment of ridges to follow the contour has made greatest progress in Sukumaland, and this measure which can be followed by the individual cultivator is being steadily extended. Contour banks require either communal effort or heavy machinery, but in districts such as Kasulu, Dodoma and Singida the use of such contour banks or broad base terraces is being increased. The terracing equipment purchased by the department was also used to good effect by various maize planters in the Moshi area.

There was considerable progress this year in the extension and improvement of grazing lands, and an additional 400,000 acres of grazing reserves for dry season use were demarcated, mainly in the Kwimba and Shinyanga districts and in the Central Province. The value of such reserves was amply demonstrated in the Lake Province where two seasons of poor rain had put a severe strain on existing pasture resources, and the loss of stock which might have assumed serious proportions was considerably reduced by making use of these reserves. An additional eight dams were dug, all for the purpose of providing water on these grazing reserves.

Other soil conservation measures have also been demonstrated and extended and these include a large increase in the planting of contour hedges, the adoption of strip cropping, the building of check dams in gulleys, protection of river banks and catchment areas, the extension of village rotational grazing and, of considerable importance, the restoration and improvement of soil fertility by the addition of farmyard manure.

Marketing

It was possible to make important changes in the system of marketing cotton in the Morogoro and Kilosa districts as a result of the closure of the open markets on the expiry of the leases on the plots in these markets at the end of 1938. All cotton areas in these districts were zoned to specific ginneries which will now receive the full benefit of the time and money which they devote to the development of their areas. The ginners were enabled to effect savings through the elimination of the competition previously exercised by the middlemen who held leases in these markets and they agreed to return a part of the savings to the growers who received an additional half cent per kilogram on all seed cotton sold throughout the Eastern Province.

Before the season commenced the ginners were advised of Government's intention to encourage production to the fullest extent and they readily agreed to share the savings which would accrue from a reduction in overhead operating costs with the growers; in the Eastern Province where the output per ginnery is low, the ginners agreed to increase the promulgated minimum price of first grade seed cotton by half a cent per kilogram, in the Lake Province the ginners paid an additional half cent per pound of seed cotton and maintaned the price of third quality cotton at one cent and in the Tanga and Northern provinces an additional two cents per kilogram of seed cotton was paid. Allowances for increased costs of freight and insurance afloat and in store before realization in the United Kingdom were made in the formula used for promulgating the minimum price.

Food and Export Control

On the outbreak of war the department became responsible for the organization of and the executive work connected with Food and Export Control. The organization of food supplies for the military and the rationing of the internment camp were also undertaken by the department.

Experimental Work

The Sisal Experiment Station, Mlingano.—The series of field experiments laid down on this station in 1936 are progressively becoming more informative in regard to several aspects concerning the cultivation of sisal. The annual report of the station is being published as a departmental pamphlet.

The Coffee Research and Experiment Station, Lyamungu.—Development has proceeded in accordance with the programme of experimentation authorized by Government in consultation with the industry. The annual report of the station is being submitted for publication as a departmental pamphlet.

At the experiment stations and development centres of Ukiriguru, Nyamahona, Lubaga, Tumbi, Mwanhala, Morogoro, Kingolwira and Iheme work proceeded throughout the year on the lines detailed in the report for 1938. Full details of the progress made are on record and persons interested can obtain such information on application to the Director of Agriculture.

Publications

The following pamphlets were published by the department during 1939 :—

No. 24. Reports from the General Experiment Farms, 1938.

No. 25. Sisal Experimental Station Report for the year 1938.

No. 23. "Beeswax"—still in the press.

Entomological Leaflet No. 17. Report of the Entomologist for 1938.

Thirteen articles were submitted for publication in the *East African Agricultural Journal*.

Section III.—Legislative Changes

(i) The Pyrethrum Industry Ordinance, 1939.

(ii) The Sisal Industry (Amendment) Ordinance, 1939.

(iii) The Tea (Amendment) Ordinance, 1939.

(iv) Eleven Orders made under the Emergency Powers Defence Act, 1939—The Defence Regulations, 1939.

Conclusion

It is desired to record the thanks of the department to those who have helped in the work during the year in particular members of the various crop Boards, the officers of the Provincial Administration and the East African Agricultural Research Station. I would also record my appreciation of the loyalty and hard work of the staff of the department during what has been a difficult year.

Dar es Salaam,
6th February, 1941.

R. W. R. Miller,
Director of Agriculture

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